1	2	3
18	Punjab	38000
19	Rajasthan	54000
20	Tamil Nadu	38000
21	Uttaranchal	10000
22	Uttar Pradesh (East)	54000
23	Uttar Pradesh (West)	50000
24	West Bengal	85000
25	Kolkata	0
26	Chennai	0
	TOTAL	861000

Access to Computers

1573. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the majority of people do not have access to computers;

(b) whether it is also a fact that computers are too high priced to reach the middle classes;

(c) whether any effort is being made to ensure that the prices of computers are contained within the reach of a majority of the people; and

(d) the details of the steps Government have taken for availability of computers at lower prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI S.U.THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir.

(c) In order to bring the benefits of Information Technology to larger cross section of people, the policy, procedure and tariff framework, is continuously reviewed.

(d) To catalyse increase in PC ownership a number of steps have been taken by the Government as per details given in the Statement [Refer to the statement appended to the Answer to Unstarred Question No. 1565(c)]

Use of Linux Operating System

1574. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received specific representations from social activists demanding that greater emphasis be given to the use of 'Linux' operating systems in the country;

(b) whether it i's a fact that Linux system would be cheaper;

(c) whether any task force has been set up to encourage cheaper operating systems in the country;

(d) by when this task force v^ould complete its work; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that the country get the cheapest software for its people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHR S.U.THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Linux is an open source Operating System, distributed under general Public License (G^L) and its source code is freely available.

(c) No. Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Government's main concern is that needs of all sections of the society are adequately met in terms of quality functionality and price. Government is also keen that local content is available in all the solution providers.